



# Care Home Guide: Before You Move



# *Introduction*

This guide provides a checklist of things you might need to think about, and people you should contact, before you move into a care home. Everyone's situation is different so it might be that not every point applies to you - just use this as a general guide of things to consider before you move home.



# Things to do

## Your House

If you own your own home, the value of your house can be included in the council's means-tested financial assessment for care home funding, or it can be disregarded. This depends on who has been living with you in the house. See Age Scotland's *Care Home Guide: Funding* for more information.

You might be planning to sell your home; for more information about how to do this see Age Scotland's *Housing Options: a guide for older people in Scotland*.

If you are planning to rent out your home, get advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau about the issues and responsibilities involved in being a landlord.

If you rent your home you will need to give your landlord notice that you are moving out. The period of notice you need to give will be detailed in your tenancy agreement.



## Legal

When you know you are moving to a care home, it can be a good time to get all your affairs in order. This might include:

- **Writing a will.** A will allows you to decide what happens to your money and possessions when you die. Although you can write a will yourself it is advisable to contact a solicitor for help as problems can arise after your death if mistakes have been made, or if the will is not entirely clear. If you already have a will, make sure it is up-to-date. See Age Scotland's factsheet *Making your will* for more information.
- **Setting up a Power of Attorney.** Power of Attorney is a legal document in which you give someone else the authority to make specific decisions about your life if you were to need help, or lose the ability to make decisions for yourself. Nobody has automatic authority to make decisions about your life if you lose the ability to make decisions for yourself, unless there is a Power of Attorney set up in advance. See Age Scotland's *A guide to Power of Attorney in Scotland* for more information.
- **Writing an Advance Directive.** An Advance Directive allows you to record any medical treatments that you **do not** want to be given in the future, in case you later become unable to make, or communicate, decisions for yourself. It will only be used if you cannot make or communicate a decision for yourself. It is also sometimes called a Living Will. Talk to your doctor if you would like to make an advance directive. See Age Scotland's *Advance Directives* factsheet for more information.
- **Paying for care.** There are a lot of things to consider if you are paying for some or all of your own care costs, especially if you have a partner or own property. See Age Scotland's *Care Home Guide: Funding* for more information or phone the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222** for advice specific to your situation.



- **Managing your money.** If you have savings, it is important to check that they are invested as well as they can be. See the **Money Advice Service** website [www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk) or call them on **0800 138 7777** for impartial advice about your finances.

## Forwarding post

You might want to organise for any post that might be sent to your old address to be forwarded to your new address. This can be done through the Royal Mail, either online ([www.royalmail.com/personal/receiving-mail/redirection](http://www.royalmail.com/personal/receiving-mail/redirection)) or at any Post Office. A redirection can be really useful, especially for the first couple of months after you move. It will give you peace of mind that you will not miss any important post and any post that is redirected to you can act as a reminder for you to tell the sender of your change in address. There is a charge for this service.

## Belongings

Firstly you should decide what you would like to take with you to the care home when you move. The care home you are moving to should provide you with a list of things that you might want to bring with you. You should be allowed to bring in most personal items that you would like. If there is a favourite big piece of furniture you would like to take, ask the care home if they would be able to accommodate it. It can be a good idea to label clothes and any other belongings that might get confused for someone else's (such as mobile phones) to identify them as yours, and prevent any mix-ups.

Next decide what should happen with the things that you don't want to take with you. You might want to give these to friends or family members, donate them to a charity shop or sell them.



# Who to tell

You will need to notify a number of companies and organisations that you are changing address. These may include:

## **Utilities and Contracts**

- Gas company
- Electricity company
- Local Council (so you can get a final council tax bill)
- Internet provider
- TV licensing
- Insurance provider (home, contents and car)
- Phone company (including mobile phones)
- HMRC
- Anyone else you have a contract with  
(e.g. Subscriptions to magazines or online retailers)

If there is no one else living in your house, you will need to provide a final meter reading to your gas and electricity company on the day you move out so they can send you a final bill and close your account.



## Finance

- Banks – remember to inform every bank that you have an account with that you are changing address
- Building society
- Department for Work and Pensions – if you are claiming any benefits it is important to let the Department for Work and Pensions know of your change of circumstances.
- Private or occupational pension companies

## Health

- GP
- Dentist
- Optician
- Any other relevant healthcare professional
- Care provider

## Other

- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
- Library
- Electoral register at your local council
- Friends and family

Once all this is organised you can relax, knowing that you have taken care of all your affairs and can look forward to moving in to a comfortable new home. Remember that moving into a care home can be the start of a positive new life; there will be no need to worry about utility bills or household chores, you will have company whenever you would like it and trained staff are always on hand to help.



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